(b) The present vacancy position is summarised below:

	Sanctioned	Posted	Vacant
Group A	92	77	15
Group B	398	331	67

Out of this 3 Group 'A' officers and 55 Group 'B' officers have recently been-posted.

(c) 11 posts of Group 'A' have been recently created. These are likely to be filled up shortly. Vacancies do arise on completion of two years tenure, and action is continuously taken to fill up the posts as and when they arise.

P.C.O. Connections in Bihar

544. CHAUDHARY HARMOHAN SINGH YADAV: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to refer to the answers to Unstarred Questions 434, 627 and 1375 given in the Rajya Sabha on 26th February, 1997, 2nd June, 1998 and 9th June, 1998, respectively and state;

(a) whether all the rural women in Trimubani Ghat, Bahara, Darbhanga (Bihar) who have applied for the PCO/ ISD/STD connection during the year 1996-97 and 1997-98 have got the connection;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI KABINDRA PURKAYASTHA): (a) to (c) Sir, only two applications in Trimubani Ghat and Bahara of Darbhanga District (Bihar) are pending for the year 1997-98. They will be provided STD PCOs after expansion of Benipur Exchange and approval by the PCO allotment committee.

Vacant Posts of Superintendent of Post Offices

545. SHRI JOYANTA ROY: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the number of districts in West Bengal in which the posts of Superintendent of post offices are lying vacant during the last six months; and

(b) the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI KABINDRA PURKAYASTHA): (a) Only, One.

(b) Officers posted successively against the vacant post of Superintendent of Post Offices, Murshidabad have not joined. Presently, a case filed in the Central Administrative Tribunal against the order of posting is pending. Superintendent of Post Offices, Birbhum Division is holding the charge of Murshidabad Division as an additional charge.

डाक सेवाओं के प्रभारों में वृद्धि

546. **श्री रामजी लाल:** क्या प्रधान मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) क्या यह सच है कि सरकार ने 31 अगस्त, 1998 से डाक सेवाओं के प्रभारों में भारी वृद्धि की थी;

(ख) यदि हां, तो इसके क्या कारण थे और यह निर्णय कब लिया गया था; और

(ग) डाक सेवाओं के प्रभारों में वृद्धि से सरकार को कितनी आय होगी?

संचार मंत्रालय में राज्य मंत्री (श्री कबीन्द्र पुरकायस्थ): (क) और (ख) 31 अगस्त, 1998 से केवल आठ डाक सेवाओं के संबंध में शुल्क में संशोधन किया गया था ताकि उन विभिन्न डाक सेवाओं की बढ़ी हुई प्रचालन लागत को पूरा किया जा सके, जिनके लिए आम बजट से अत्यधिक आर्थिक सहायता लेनी पड़ती थी। यह अनुमान है कि शुल्क में संशोधन के बावजूद राजस्व अधिकांश डाक सेवाओं की प्रचालन लागत को पूरा करने के लिए पर्याप्त नहीं होगा।

(ग) ऐसा अनुमान है कि शुल्क में वृद्धि से प्रतिवर्ष 272 करोड़ रु० तथा चालू वित्तीय वर्ष में लगभग 159 करोड़ रु० अतिरिक्त राजस्व प्राप्त होगा।

Commemorative Stamps

547. SHRI ASHOK MITRA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the number of commemorative